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ABSTRACT

Twelve educators from eight different countries spent three weeks at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in July 1973 comparing notes on the prospects for public support of higher education. This monograph is a compilation of the major points made at the seminar. Emphasis is placed on access to higher education, curricula, the professoriate, the new structure of higher education, and higher education and public authority. (MJM)

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Reflections on an International Seminar

CAN HIGHER EDUCATION RECAPTURE PUBLIC SUPPORT?

BARBARA BAIRD ISRAEL

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an International Seminar

CAN HIGHER EDUCATION RECAPTURE PUBLIC SUPPORT?

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CONTENTS

Seminar Members	vii
Introduction James A. Perkins	ix
1. Access to Higher Education	1
2. Curricula	11
3. The Professoriate	19
4. The New Structure of Higher Education	27
5. Higher Education and Public Authority	35

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INTRODUCTION

Twelve educators from eight different countries spent three weeks at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in July 1973 comparing notes on the prospects for public support of higher education. The seminar was sponsored by the Aspen Institute and supported, in part, by the International Council for Educational Development (ICED).

The sessions have produced three publications. The first is a collection of edited transcripts of original presentations by members of the seminar. This volume has been distributed on a limited basis to those who attended the seminar and to a few interested others. The second contains some of these essays selected for more careful attention and extensive editing by those who presented them. This volume has now been published in the ICED conference papers series. The third is the present volume. Barbara Baird Israel was asked to keep her own notes on the discussion at the seminar, to collect what seemed to her the main points made, and to present them in the form of a monograph under her own name.

How real and how universal is the current so-called crisis in public support of higher education? This is the first question. That the educators believe there is a crisis was clear. All believed that higher education would not receive the same priority of attention in the 1970s as it did in the 1960s. California was presented as something of an exception to this general rule, but the majority of the seminar members were not convinced that this was the case.

Belief in the crisis is, however, easier to prove than the

reality of crisis. In the United States, for example, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education reported on a study of student attitudes which suggested that an overwhelming majority of U. S. undergraduates were more than satisfied with their education. Another study reported that almost 80 percent of parents hoped and expected that their children would get some postsecondary school experience. Great numbers of state legislatures maintain a fondness and a deep sense of responsibility toward the public institutions in their states. Alumni attitudes toward the private institutions they attended have evidenced some disaffection, but there are few signs as yet that this is being translated into reduced support. Perhaps it can be said that there is a worldwide malaise in that the future looks less bright than the past. Yet there would seem to be continuing strong forces working to provide balance in the picture.

In many ways the current circumstances, in the United States at least, find a fascinating parallel in the circumstances and attitudes in the United States before its Civil War. At that time interest in higher education was leveling off and even, in some respects, declining. There was a higher degree of grumbling on the part of students than there had ever been. The issue of the relevance of classical studies in the face of the rising need for science and technology was very visible. Of course, the Civil War changed all that. All of which leads to a somewhat dismal conclusion that it has been our major wars, both international and domestic, that have shaken our country out of its lethargy and have provided, at least, the atmosphere for dramatic expansion and an effective search for new curricula and new organizations.

This is not to say that public interest and public support are the consequences only of catastrophe, but it is a fact of life that catastrophe frequently precedes reform and large-scale public support for our academic and other institutions. One has only to look at the history of municipal government

to recognize that governmental reform at this level was and is frequently the result of floods in the Ohio Valley or an explosion on the coast of Texas. One might conclude, therefore, that some of the current leveling off of public support for and interest in institutions of higher education may be a consequence of relative domestic tranquility.

The seminar did not probe these more long-run and fundamental causes. It did, however, as Barbara Israel's following chapters indicate, deal with more proximate and visible reasons for the general view that higher education does not enjoy the same station in life as in previous decades. Such proximate causes that seemed worth examining were those having to do with access to higher education, curricular innovation and reform, the relationship between higher education and employment, governance for efficiency and democracy, and coordinating systems and public accountability.

These particular topics were looked at through the double prism of an international point of view in which experiences were shared on the one hand and their relationship to the prospects for public support compared on the other hand. Because of the nature of the topic the discussion focused primarily on experiences in developed rather than developing countries. It must be freely admitted that the members of the seminar, being students as well as practitioners of higher education, found the business of analysis more comfortable than that of prescription (though one recognizes that prescription without analysis is likely to be blind). It was clear throughout these discussions that the educators present recognized that their power to change their institutions had to be viewed in the context of evolving societal interests and social priorities outside higher education itself.

And so the seminar had four interconnected purposes. The first was to discover the possible universality of the problem

of public support. The second was to discover the similarities and differences in the pressure points where public criticism may be dangerous. The third was to discover ways in which these various pressure points could be relieved. And fourth, and far more subtly, we wished to discover how much we could really learn from one another's experiences.

Barbara Israel's piece represents the work of a skilled observer who is writing a personal report rather than any descriptive summary of what was said. It is quite probable that special points that intrigued a particular member of the seminar may not have surfaced in this document. On the other hand, there was no attempt to invent interesting things that people did not in fact say. What we have is a critique of a seminar, an identification of matters that the writer felt it was important to record, and a statement about some key problems in higher education. It must be at the center of concern of all those who have some understanding of higher education and the future of higher education around the world.

An observation is now in order. Comparative higher education, of which this seminar may represent a small building block, is in its infancy. It is especially undeveloped as a field that cuts across national and cultural boundaries. And, as in other fields, comparative higher education is struggling to evolve from purely descriptive studies, where experiences in other countries are faithfully recorded, to the development of analytic model studies that will make it possible to know how much we can learn from the experience of others as well as any experiences that may reveal universal characteristics. Beyond the business of finding out what we can learn from the experience of others, there is the deeper matter of determining any general tendencies or general pressures that affect, in one way or another, all societies that are subject to the tides of industrial revolution and participatory democracy.

This is not the place to try to make profound statements about the fragility of universal truths in the social domain. But we do not need to accept that, in a study of man's institutions, we are helpless in the face of manifold differences. We may not be able to teach others what to do but, as Edward Sheffield of Canada has said, we can learn from others even if we cannot teach them.

Barbara Israel has done a masterful job of distilling out of our conversations a series of observations that are not only logically connected but, in themselves, offer important prospects for both research and new policy formulations. It is hoped that the reader will find this little volume casts some fresh light in dark corners.

James A. Perkins
Chairman, International Council for Educational Development

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The story of the worldwide growth in higher education over the last two decades is by now an oft-told tale. Despite the greatly enlarged capacities of older institutions and the proliferation of new kinds of institutions, in most countries the demand for higher education continues to outpace supply. This discrepancy has made the question of selection of students a critical one. Yet for all of their familiarity with the problem, those who determine admissions policies—whether governments or individual institutions—continue to search for formulas that will satisfactorily resolve the question of how many and who shall have access to higher education.

In framing criteria for selection, educators face a vastly more complex set of considerations than formerly. These considerations reflect profound changes in concepts of the needs and goals of societies in their social as well as economic and technical aspects; the capacities and aspirations of individuals within those societies; and, finally, the role and function of educational institutions in their contribution to the realization of those various goals. The result has been a tortuous search for admissions formulas that will balance the aspirations of young (and older) people, the traditional standards of academic quality within institutions, the manifold requirements of economies in process of rapid change, and the quest for more equitable and just societies.

The principal criterion for admission to higher education has long been that of academic achievement, measured by examinations at the end of secondary school or on the basis of secondary school grades. In most European countries

entrance into higher education was guaranteed for those relatively few students who successfully completed academic secondary school and received the *Abitur, baccalauréat*, or a similar educational passport. Since these secondary schools were themselves highly selective, there was little need for universities (except in certain faculties) to establish special admissions policies. In the United States, where access to secondary school has been broader, a student's admission to higher education was based generally on a combination of secondary school performance and scores on a competitive nationwide examination.

Regardless of the differences in procedure, however, the common underlying assumption in such entrance requirements was that past performance betokened promise both in academic studies and, presumably, in future employment. Higher education was seen as a highly selective enterprise, training a small minority of the most capable and talented for their roles in society, with capability and talent assessed through demonstrated performance early in life. That there was a close correlation between the demonstration of academic potential and socioeconomic background of students[1] was taken as evidence of the existence of a "natural" elite.

Today, however, all these assumptions are under fire, especially the notion that only a small proportion of the population has the intellectual capabilities for higher educa-

[1] Torsten Husén gave one example from Swedish experience: Ten to fifteen years ago the educational system, from primary through university education, corresponded closely to the pyramid of class stratifications within the society. The bulk of lower-class children had primary education; the small minority of students in university (1 to 2 percent of the relevant age group) were predominantly from higher socioeconomic classes. Today this correspondence no longer exists: 85 percent of the young complete secondary, and universities enroll 25 to 30 percent of the age group, from a broad spectrum of economic classes.

tion. There is evidence that talent and intelligence are randomly distributed throughout the population and that intellectual capabilities are not inherently fixed, that they can be developed through education. Hellmut Becker termed this "... the basic scientific experience of our time—that educational challenge can develop talent much further than we ever anticipated in the history of mankind. ..."[2]

The implications for societies and their educational institutions are clear: by educating more and more people a society increases its supply of talent and competence; by limiting access to education, it decreases the supply and simultaneously perpetuates social inequities. This conclusion strengthens the drive for more and higher levels of education for more people. It does not, however, answer the question of how, in societies that are not economically prepared to educate everyone, students shall be selected for higher education.

Part of the demand for equality of access to higher education is that admissions be revised in favor of groups previously excluded from higher education—the poor, the working class, women, and minority ethnic and racial groups. If it is accepted that an individual's intellectual capabilities can be developed through education or through an educative environment, then it must be assumed that they can be stunted by the lack of exposure to education. It is argued that because of economic and social deprivations deriving from class distinctions, certain groups in society have been deprived of educational opportunity from the outset of their formative years. Their performances in secondary school or earlier have been weak not because of inherent lack of

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[2] Hellmut Becker, "The Relations Between the Occupational and Educational Systems," *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, New York: ICED, 1973, p. 48. *All quotations from the Aspen seminar are taken from ICED's first collection of edited transcripts of original presentations by members of the seminar.*

capability but because of basic deficiencies of opportunity and training in school and outside of school. This view has fueled the attack on admissions criteria based on past academic performance.

However cogent in its logic and compelling in its quest for a more just society, this argument does not uncomplicate the matter of selection. Rather it suggests that a new or at least broadened function of higher education is to provide a curative to longstanding economic and social divisions within society. In practical terms it opens up several questions. Should quotas exist, and if so, should they be exclusionary or inclusionary? Should higher education undertake remedial educational efforts for students admitted without regard to past performance? Will academic standards within higher education deteriorate? What emphasis should remain on past performance? Should performance be gauged by nationwide or standardized tests, on average grades, or on evidence of particular aptitudes? Further, what is the relation between academic achievement and employment potential and performance?

When higher education served mainly to prepare an elite for leadership in society or for academic roles and when those who completed higher education were virtually guaranteed a position that matched their training, academic performance was a fair indicator of future prospects. As higher education systems have moved away from this elite training, however, the relation of education to employment prospects has become attenuated. Not only has it become less possible to ensure that graduates will have employment in fields for which they are trained, but also it has become less possible to predict on the basis of academic performance who will be successful in later life. Recent research in Poland has shown, for example, that high academic scorers were found to be bored and dissatisfied with their jobs and less productive than those with mediocre school records.

Obviously, this finding may reflect on the nature of the employment as much as it does on the nature of the academic training. Although this finding may not be universal, it can still be added to the arsenal of those who challenge the traditional premises reflected by higher education's admissions policies. (Interestingly, the observation that the more educated may be dissatisfied with their jobs because they are overqualified is one of the arguments advanced in West Germany and elsewhere against expansion of higher education.)

Formulas have recently been established in a variety of countries to attempt to meet the increased demand for higher education and to balance egalitarian drives with academic standards and with the needs of changing industrial societies. These revisions in policies govern the accessibility of higher education to young people and in some cases the admission of older age groups or minority groups.

Revisions in Access Affecting Secondary School Students

The Federal Republic of Germany has had perhaps the most difficult time in trying to reconcile the conflicting values of egalitarianism and democracy with the needs of a highly industrialized society, and furthermore with a firm tradition of scholarship and research in the universities. In West Germany, the *Abitur*, granted to students who complete academic secondary school and pass an examination, until very recently guaranteed entrance into the university. Because of the rapid growth of secondary school enrollments and completions, however, the universities can no longer accommodate all holders of an *Abitur*. In 1973 alone, a reported 36,000 qualified students could not be admitted. The individual States now decide on the number of students allowed to enter each faculty, and admissions quotas (*numerus clausus*) are set for faculties, such as medicine, where applicants greatly exceed the number of places. Entrance is dependent primarily on student achievement as measured by

average marks. The proposed new University Bill will emphasize applicants' post-*Abitur* experience and the national manpower needs, and will include consideration for "socially difficult" cases as well.

These new procedures satisfy few. Most educators dislike reliance on average marks as indicators of achievement since they are neither objective measures nor do they reveal special talents and abilities relevant to postsecondary study. That the *Abitur* no longer guarantees a place in the university has also generated much disillusionment, especially among working-class families, because hope of attaining access through the *Abitur* motivated enrollment in secondary schools to begin with. Access policies in West Germany are consequently enmeshed in a tangle of academic, social, and economic considerations made even more complicated by political tensions between the States and the federal government, necessitating the growing intervention of the courts in settling questions where university policies come in conflict with public policies.

Belgium presents an example of what might be termed implicit rather than overt resistance to mass education. Its new and broadened admissions procedures are not supplemented by policies to ensure that the bulk of those who enter a university will also complete it. At the end of secondary schooling students take an examination that functions mostly to eliminate those (about 5 percent) who cannot go on to higher education by reason of some disability. Those who pass are guaranteed places by law. There is entrance to all faculties of the university (except engineering, which has its own entrance examination). In effect, however, this procedure serves to increase only the numbers of students in the first year of studies. Students receive no orientation or guidance, and about 40 to 50 percent leave by the end of the first year. Performance in the first year of university becomes, therefore, the filter to a narrow educational base.

In contrast, mass higher education has come into its own in the United States. Its foundation seems to be a consensus that, although in a democratic society everyone may be entitled to postsecondary education, not everyone should have access to, nor does everyone want or need, the same kind or the same amount of higher education. Thus public support appears contingent on the extent to which institutions acknowledge differentiation of purpose. Two-year community colleges and other kinds of nonuniversity education have won wide and enthusiastic support. In contrast, policies of open admission to four-year institutions have met with a more critical reception. "Universal access" to higher education has thus been advocated to promote access to *some* part of the higher education system (generally to two-year junior or community colleges as in California and New York), not necessarily to four-year colleges.

In terms of the broad general trends in admissions, U. S. institutions seem to be moving away from reliance on standardized measures of student achievement, e.g., College Board scores, and toward a greater variety of indicators of a student's potential. These take into account factors such as income, sex, race, and geographic region, factors that may have influenced or interfered with educational achievement in the past. In Europe, on the other hand, there is some movement toward greater nationwide standardization of measures and procedures.

Revisions in Access Affecting New Groups

In Sweden the massive growth in secondary school enrollments and the consequent rising demand for university entrance have brought forth a variety of changes in the education system and in access patterns. One of the most interesting of these changes affects not young people but adults. Increasing recognition is now being given to work experience and other qualifications for higher education, with less emphasis on formal educational background. For

example, admission to university studies can now be granted to anyone 25 years or older, who has five years of work experience. Additionally the Swedish system provides free formal education, which can lead to qualification for the university, to adults over 18 years in afternoon classes at public institutions. These shifts in access policies, although not necessarily redressing social inequalities,[3] do augur a broadened education system and perhaps a lifelong continuation of education.

The trend in Sweden to broadened access for adults has a counterpart in the United States, where as Ernest Boyer pointed out, "the most dramatic access trend facing post-secondary education . . . is among the working adults."[4] An estimated one-third of the total enrollment in the State University of New York are students over 25 years; at certain community colleges more than half the students are over 25. The average age of students at the new Empire State College in New York, enrolling predominantly working adults and housewives, is 32. This trend has several implications for curriculum and the time scheduling of classes. Furthermore, it may foreshadow the end of the residential campus as the prime locus for higher education. Moreover, public support of higher educational opportunities for adults has been, Boyer noted, "remarkably affirmative."

A final note should be added on a problem peculiar to the United States. Efforts to provide for recruitment of members of minority groups through special admissions procedures, though at first hailed, seem to have since engendered negative public response. It is a matter of debate, however, whether

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[3] Those who utilize these new educational opportunities are generally already in more advantageous positions in society. Adult education has thus not really served to equalize opportunity for lower-class groups.

[4] Ernest Boyer, "Access and Public Support," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, p. 71.

the reasons are related to the costs of special programs, to questions of lowering academic standards, to prejudice, or to resentment that any group should be given favored treatment in admissions.[5]

What lessons can be drawn from these disparate attempts to deal with the increased demand for higher education? The first observation is that any response to the demand, while often conceived of as a simple matter of accommodating greater numbers–of providing more places for more students–involves far more than quantitative solutions. Every change in admissions policies to broaden access has brought in its wake complex problems having little to do with numbers *per se*. Mass education is qualitatively different from elite education. Broadened access has led to demands for new curricula more relevant to the aspirations, talents, and needs of a wider range of students. It has led to an influx of greater numbers of teachers who have challenged and weakened the traditional power of the professor and have been part of a diffusion of governing power within institutions. It has led to growth of a system of more differentiated institutions. And the entrance of new groups to higher education–working adults, housewives, retirees–has intensified the pressure for restructuring higher education so that it provides more flexible arrangements for courses of study and degrees. These new arrangements have in their turn demonstrated cost-saving possibilities that may also help to generate greater public support.

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[5] One complicating factor is that quota policies can be viewed as reverse discrimination against majorities in the population. The Supreme Court of the United States has a suit under review in which admissions quotas are challenged on this ground. See Iver Peterson, "Time To Decide If Whites Are Victimized," *The New York Times*, November 25, 1973.

CURRICULA

The question of curricula, of what to teach and the related issues of how and where it should be taught, is in many countries today the focus of controversy and the source of a confusion that is the heart of the problem of institutional response to mass higher education. For long it has seemed clear that the new patterns of higher education in complex industrial and postindustrial societies would call for new content. There has been little agreement, however, on what directions new curricula should take and on how to translate into specifics the student demand for "relevancy." The great variety of "publics" seeking different kinds of curricula in postsecondary education complicates the issue, for changes in curricula in response to one sector of the public have often triggered opposing reactions in other sectors.

The new access patterns discussed in the previous chapter have brought to the fore demands from many parents and students, perhaps the majority, for an education that will lead to employment. They seek curricula geared more to practical than to academic interests. In addition, there is a drive for more differentiated curricula to fit the wide range of aspirations and capabilities of students now having access to higher education. Prompted by the urgency of social and political problems, many students also want curricula that deal directly with current problems, that include attention to social and economic injustices, and that press institutions of higher education into an active role in remedying the problems.

Aside from students and parents, many other publics are looking to higher education to answer particular needs. Employers in a vast range of businesses and industries

demand more people with a greater variety of technical and managerial skills. These skills, or at least the groundwork for them, are to be provided in a mass higher education system. Governments, too, seek the trained people and the research that institutions of higher education can produce to deal with complex social problems. By selective funding of particular projects, they can and do influence curriculum.

Not all the impetus for change in curricula stems from groups outside the colleges and universities. The knowledge explosion itself has fed a chain reaction that has made curricular changes inevitable, as ever greater degrees of specialization are required to handle discrete topics, to expand and refine knowledge. Specialization had led to another kind of pressure, the need to develop ways to relate discrete and fragmented fields of inquiry to one another. The movement toward curricula that include interdisciplinary studies has become a logical correlate to specialization.

Another pressure against the traditional curricula comes from academics themselves, particularly younger and more militant teachers and researchers who have different values and goals from those of the traditionally dominant chair-holders in European universities and tenured professors in U. S. institutions. They are spearheading the drive, especially in the social sciences, to revise curricula, to bring them up to date, and in some cases to politicize them.

In sum, the seeds of change are germinating within higher education as well as outside. As Freeman Butts pointed out, universities and colleges are not simply the passive objects of external pressures for reform. Historically, reform has occurred when the external pressures coalesce with strong internal drives for change.[1]

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[1] In this respect, a parallel may be drawn between the university and the Roman Church. Both institutions with long entrenched traditions and power, they are now subject to increasing pressure from external agencies for reform, but internal pressures may in the long run equally produce change.

Relation of Curricula to Employment

In many countries today growing numbers of students are seeking an education that will prepare them for employment.[2] This trend may be related in part to the influx of new kinds of students into higher education, students from working-class families or minority groups, with more practical and realistic aspirations than those who preceded them. It also reflects tightening labor markets in some countries. In Sweden, for example, enrollment in specialized, job-oriented fields such as nursing and electronics rose following a year (1969) in which university graduates had trouble finding jobs. Simultaneously, there was a drop in entrance into more academic fields of study. In the United States, too, there is currently a fall-off in the demand for entry to liberal arts colleges and a corresponding increase in enrollments at technical colleges and noncollegiate institutions offering job-oriented training. Undoubtedly one of the spurs to rising enrollments in junior and community colleges has been their greater orientation to training for employment, and even to training for local job markets.

Serious implications abound in this pressure on higher education to relate education to employment in direct ways. First, there is less possibility in most societies of automatic employment upon graduation, of job guarantees for graduates.[3] This is so even in those societies that lean heavily on

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[2] Among the exceptions is Germany where the pendulum is swinging the other way. Whereas formerly students were seeking vocational or professional credentials in specific fields, many are turning to studies, in the social sciences especially, that offer no guarantee of employment, that are but loosely linked, if at all, to an employment market.

[3] The expectations of many students and parents, however, are based on older notions of what higher education could provide. In the elite institutions of the past, degrees virtually guaranteed appropriate employment. Today they cannot, though many still assume that they do. See the analysis of this problem presented by Ladislav Cerych in *A Global Approach to Higher Education* (New York: ICED, April 1972). He notes that in Europe, students and employers "as well as planners and policymakers, approach emerging mass higher education and its diffuse links with employment with a value structure belonging to elitist higher education." (p. 16).

manpower forecasts as a guide to future requirements for trained personnel. Moreover, in societies that cannot afford to train great numbers, investments in training people in the wrong skills can be of inestimable damage. Thus it may become especially important for developing countries—much as they need trained manpower—to get away from the notion that higher education prepares people for specific tasks in the economy. Already in some countries, such as the Soviet Union, where highly specialized training was the rule, a loosening of curricula is now taking place because of the difficulties in matching the highly trained with appropriate employment. A related problem is that in some fields rapid technological change may make precise training obsolete in a short time.

One possible line of resolution between the drive for employment-oriented training and the dangers of not being able to match the trained personnel with appropriate employment, and of teaching obsolescent skills, lies in recurrent or lifelong education. If recurrent education becomes a reality *and* if it becomes one of the vehicles for upgrading skills and knowledge or for retraining people for new fields of employment, it would remove some of the current pressures on institutions of higher education to orient studies toward employment and would increase the pressure to provide young people with the means for "learning how to learn." The growing number of programs mounted by business and industry for training in specialized skills also poses another possible solution. Traditional higher education institutions would be able to funnel students to other sources for the specialized training needed for employment in specific industries.

Whether these other forms of education become the prime sources of job-related training, the basic question of what the curricula of traditional higher education should embrace remains, as do the questions of whether and to what extent

higher education should be related to employment. For historically, just as it can be argued that education was never solely designed for employment, neither was it offered solely for its own sake. Yet, as Henri Janne noted, the difficulty in deciding on the content of higher education is compounded by this question of recurrent education and will continue to be until it is known whether recurrent education will be a reality.

Another intriguing question was raised by Hellmut Becker. To what extent will education reshape employment? Not only are new kinds of jobs being created by the educated, but there are signs that more education for more people throughout a society may lead to changes in the very nature of employment and its organizational aspects. Becker noted:

> The recent tensions, for example, in the Volvo factory in Sweden or with Fiat in Italy show that better education will change the character of work. Charlie Chaplin's critique of the work system in *Modern Times* forty years ago will find an answer in the organization of more creative and more cooperative work situations in tomorrow's factories.[4]

Curricula and Social Purpose

Mass access to higher education has also posed another set of problems concerning curricula. These relate to social purpose. With the expansion of higher education, the public and governments as well as students have tended to expect more from institutions in terms of solving or remedying social problems. Yet higher education's response to these pressures has not inevitably created public sympathy. In Western Europe the pressures toward revised curricula have generally been enmeshed in highly volatile political atmospheres and,

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[4] Hellmut Becker, "The Relations Between the Occupational and Educational Systems," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, pp. 52–53.

not surprisingly, public attitudes toward the institutions and what they teach may stem mostly from preexisting political biases. In the United States, too, attempts to reorient studies toward public purposes and issues that were previously neglected in the curriculum have met with mixed reactions by the public. University-based research for the government during the 1960s was blasted because it undergirded a war that was bitterly opposed by part of the public. Revisions or additions to curricula to redress the grievances of students from minority groups–for example, the introduction of "black studies" in the curricula of many institutions–have also been under attack, since they inevitably reflect political and social tensions in society.

Other difficulties for institutions in contributing to solutions to social problems stem from inherent features of academic functioning. For example, largely in response to government initiative and funding, research projects have been undertaken on large social problems such as urban deterioration or the environment. But while the problems are urgent and immediate, institutions and their researchers have no means to come up with immediate answers, nor the political clout to effect change even if they were sure of what direction to move in.

Since the problem of deciding what curricula should embrace is obviously related to the question of the purposes of mass higher education, it is not surprising that in societies that have no clear notion of what these purposes are, curricula are in disarray. Thus, it might be argued that institutions must define for themselves without reference to the pressures of various publics what the content of studies should be. Yet since the source of most decisions on curricula is the faculty, perhaps the most divided element in institutions of higher education, this route may likely be as muddled as any other.

In the United States at least, it appears that at the

undergraduate level student choice will increasingly determine curricula. This trend will make it ever more important to inform students, parents, and the public of the relation between their choices and eventual outcome, a task thus far neglected by higher education. Again, to quote Becker:

> . . . in all highly industrialized countries it must be made clear to every student in higher education that higher education delivers capacities for better understanding of a more and more ununderstandable world, but guarantees neither an academic job nor a high salary. . . . A growing number of students will use their academic experiences in a more indirect way.[5]

Finally, it seems clear that regardless of the revisions that take place in the traditional curricula, a more basic requirement remains. As institutions move toward providing mass education they must provide for diversification of lines of study to meet the diverse talent and needs of students, to prepare them for a much greater range of opportunities in society.

[5] Ibid. pp. 51, 52.

THE PROFESSORIATE

In the transition away from elite educational systems, it is the professoriate that has experienced the most wrenching changes. A once identifiable and coherent, if not cohesive, group, the professoriate has been splintered by profound shifts in the balance of power within institutions and by the changing and sometimes conflicting demands of students, parents, and the public.

Certainly the student upheavals of the 1960s and the changes in structure and style within institutions which followed are partly responsible for the current decline in professorial powers and prestige. Another continuing source of pressure on the professoriate is rooted in the public's demand for accountability from its institutions of higher education. This demand is not simply for fiscal responsibility but for assurances that institutions are carrying out their tasks effectively and to the benefit of society. In times of stress between institutions and the public, the professoriate, as the group most closely identified with the functions of higher education, easily becomes the visible target of public displeasure.[1] This is the case today in many countries. In countries where institutions of higher education are still greatly esteemed, however, the professoriate continues to bask in public respect.

In higher education systems everywhere, as the numbers of students have increased dramatically, so too have the

[1] So have students, of course, and administrators, who often find themselves on the firing line, "running interference for the faculty," as Martin Trow noted during the discussion at Aspen.

numbers of the professoriate. But this growth in numbers has not led to more power for the professoriate but to less, and to less prestige as well, following a "sociological law," remarked Henri Janne.

Consequences of Faculty Growth

The changes in the professoriate stemming from growth are most visible in the Western European universities, in part because growth was more rapid and more recent, but largely because of the shattering of the traditional structure of the university by expanded enrollments. In Europe especially the ranks of the professoriate have been swelled by a great influx of younger, part-time teachers, many of whom are employed outside the university as well. These teachers, far from sharing the values and goals of the dominant chairholders, more often have been in opposition to them for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the formerly great and sometimes arbitrary power exercised by chairholders. In contrast to professorial power in U. S. institutions, as Torsten Husén pointed out, the chairholders in most European universities "until recently . . . enjoyed undisputed autonomy and freedom bordering upon almost complete discretion. They set the curriculum within their respective disciplines, admitted their own disciples, and decided themselves what, when and how to teach. . . . [They] did not conceive of themselves as employees with regular work schedules and assigned tasks."[2]

The younger teachers, on the other hand, do see themselves more as an employee group than as permanent

[2] Torsten Husén, "Comparative Historical Guidance," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, pp. 42, 44.

institutional fixtures.[3] Their sense of commitment to a particular institution is, predictably, undercut by their outside commitments and greater mobility. Moreover, this new group has adopted a pedagogical style related to its egalitarian attitudes that contrasts greatly with that of the chairholders. By and large, the younger teachers are in the forefront (with the students of course) of the drive to replace authoritarianism—lectures without discussion, examinations without disclosures of results, and all the trappings of a closed system—with more openness, more discussion, more give-and-take.

This pressure for transformation of teaching methods has made life difficult for many of the traditional professors, not only because of habit or because they find the new values hard to accept, but also because the burden of evaluation of their performance has passed out of their hands, and those of their professional peers, on to the students and ultimately to the public. Within some institutions this practice has led to a continuing popularity contest among teachers to gain their students' approval—a distasteful exercise for some and one that may not always serve educational purposes.

Another of the effects of the influx of a great number of younger teachers and research assistants is just now beginning to surface in the United States, where growth in higher education is beginning to slow down. On the one hand, faculties find themselves increasingly under resource con-

[3] In the United States as well, younger teachers evidence similar attitudes. They are, for example, much more likely than older professors to support collective bargaining by faculty members and the legitimacy of faculty strikes in some circumstances. Younger teachers are also more likely to see themselves as politically left or liberal, as compared with older professors, more of whom see themselves as politically conservative. See The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, *Governance of Higher Education*, (McGraw-Hill, April 1973), Appendix A, tables A-2, A-10, A-12, from Martin Trow, et al., *National Surveys of Higher Education*, Berkeley, California, 1971.

straints, and some face the prospect of having to cut back and dismantle departments—a precarious situation for the untenured professor. On the other hand, there is simultaneously more and more pressure on faculties to redress through hiring policies the imbalances in faculty makeup—imbalances that reflect discrimination against, for example, blacks and women. Junior and untenured faculty who may favor such policies in principle may thus be placed in the uncomfortable position of opposing the demands of minorities in order to preserve their jobs and futures in the educational system.

Profound change within the ranks of the professoriate has also stemmed from the ever growing number of specialities, even within a single discipline, which has created communication barriers among professors in the same institution. This has been a logical outcome of the expansion of curricula, but it has fragmented the professoriate and led to heterogeneity in their interests and commitments.

In sum, the professoriate has become fragmented in its professional specialization, institutional commitment, and in styles and attitudes to the point where the use of a collective noun to describe this group belies the nature of the profession in today's world. It has neither singleness of purpose, function, commitment, nor constituency.

Shifting Balance of Power

Another process that has concurrently weakened professorial power within institutions is the enormous growth in administration and administrative staff. Again, the phenomenon is more recent in European institutions. In Sweden, for example, administrative staff have increased even more rapidly than the student body. As institutions have grown in size and complexity, management and governance have become increasingly important and have given rise to an almost separate establishment within institutions—one with a

different set of goals and responsibilities (institutional health, growth, prestige, proper management and accountability) and a hierarchical structure to fulfill those functions. These features of administration by their very nature do not often coincide, and sometimes conflict, with the goals and aspirations of the professoriate, whose primary commitment is to a discipline and not to institutional governance.[4]

Administration, too, has brought a different group of personnel into the university and other institutions of higher education. These are people who, not unlike the junior faculty, see themselves as the institution's employees and not as its permanent members. In terms of job advancement, security, salary, and a host of other goals, whatever power they may have lies not so much in their standing as individuals within the university community (in contrast to professors) but as a collectivity, and they have become an increasingly large force in the drive for unionization on campuses.

These transformations within the university community have had major effects on the professoriate. As participation in the governance of institutions has widened to include representatives of all the campus constituencies—students, junior faculty, nonteaching professionals,[5] and administrative staff—the faculty finds itself increasingly a minority group with, in many cases, much less of a voice in institutional matters than it once had. Perhaps of even more importance ultimately is the effect of these new constituencies when the

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[4] Administration and the faculty are not in reality always in quite such separate camps as pictured above. In many countries the distinctions blur increasingly as professors become administrators within their schools and colleges.

[5] In some U. S. institutions, for example, nonteaching professional staff, such as librarians and technicians, may even outnumber teaching staff and constitute one more addition to the growing number of power bases in institutions outside the professoriate.

institution is dealing with the public and especially with legislative or funding agencies. Their power shows up in sharp relief when, as in the United States today, institutions are forced to deal with the effects of a slowdown in growth and with budget cutbacks—in effect, with retrenchment. As Martin Trow pointed out in the discussion, when an institution is locking horns with the state over issues arising from budget cuts—issues that will have great effects on the faculty (what departments should be disbanded, what specialities will be cut out and which personnel) the inclusion of nonfaculty members (who not only outnumber faculty, but do not share the same interests) in the bargaining unit of the institution can result in decisions adverse to faculty.

Effects on Public Support

Each of the changes in the professoriate discussed above—the growth in the ranks of younger professors with different attitudes and goals; the drive for different teaching methods and curricula; the effects of specialization; and the new coalitions of power in governance within institutions—has affected public support.

Though the differences in the political and professional attitudes of younger vs. older professors may be clear to all those within institutions, this polarization is less often perceived by the public. As a result, when younger and more militant teachers take to the barricades with their students, they are likely to be seen as representative of all the faculty and, indeed, of the institution. Similarly, when a group of professors endorses a conservative policy that achieves public visibility, it too may be seen as representative of the whole. Moreover, since societies themselves are often divided on political issues, any political activity of professors that achieves public notice is likely to incur the wrath of some while it is hailed by others. For professors, of course, their rights as citizens are the foundations of their participation in political activities, but on controversial issues their actions as

private citizens may be identified with the institution, sometimes adversely affecting public support for that institution.

It is not only on political issues that the professoriate has become more visible. Because of the increasing need for expertise in government and other institutions, the professor is often sought after by agencies outside the university for guidance and specialized expertise. Thus, in response to a need of one segment of society, professors have moved from campus to government or public service and back to the campus, a movement that has not only created great strains on the institutional base in some cases, but affected public perception of the professoriate as a whole and of particular institutions. As a result institutions may easily become linked in the public mind to one or another political administration with sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy consequences in public support and funding.

Though a resolution of these tensions within the professoriate and in its relation to public support may be impossible, one route to improving current relations may be through better understanding. As Burton Clark suggested:

> Those within the profession as well as in the general public need more information and insight on the workings of this heterogeneous and highly differentiated occupation that plays such an important role in societies of increasing knowledge and expertise. . . . We must emphasize the variety of demands, the pluralism of roles . . . in effect, the many shapes of modern academic man.[6]

[6] Burton Clark, unpublished paper prepared for Aspen Conference.

THE NEW STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

For all of the complications posed by the trend toward mass systems of higher education the picture is not necessarily gloomy. Certain features in the emerging profile of higher education may substantially improve public support.

In those countries where mass education is already a reality, expectations that it would become standardized and its quality diluted have, for the most part, not been realized. In traditional institutions, for example, the greater competition among students for places has led not to lower academic standards but to higher ones. Moreover, both traditional and new institutions are diversifying in their efforts to provide (1) new kinds of curricula for young people, and (2) traditional kinds of curricula for new clienteles, for working and retired adults, for example. Some institutions, in addition, are working toward the provision of new curricula for a new clientele within a new structure and concept of higher education. In short, mass education systems have seemingly brought forth not homogeneity, but pluralism, represented by a great assortment of institutions that are linked together not by their sameness but by their commitment to differentiated functions.[1]

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[1] An interesting parallel between educational and economic diversification in highly industrialized societies is made by Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970). He argues against the seeming consensus that mass culture, education, and styles of life in "techno-societies" are standardized and choice minimized. Standardization, he maintains, is reaching its peak (if not yet in Europe, certainly in the United States). Far from "racing toward cultural homogeneity . . . just the opposite is true . . . education [is] being pushed to diversify its output, exactly as the economy is doing." p. 275.

Basis for Public Support

These arrangements seem to promise renewed public support for higher education because they answer a variety of needs. They allow for the specialized training at professional and vocational levels that is seen as a necessary component of education in industrialized and industrializing societies. At the same time, they provide educational opportunities to a broader spectrum of society both in age level and educational background, for those who missed higher education in their youth and for those who, whatever their previous level of formal schooling, want more education.

For the young themselves, this differentiation in higher education provides a greater range of options not only in curricula and course of study but also in the chance to alternate work experience with schooling.[2] It not only alleviates the problem of prolonged adolescence among those who are spending more and more years at non-stop schooling, but also lessens the pressure on students who might feel they have only one shot at higher education and, like it or not, must pursue it immediately after secondary school.

The more flexible arrangements engender a greater degree of personal motivation and permit accommodation to more varied personal circumstances, hours, outside responsibilities, etc. For example, the Empire State College in New York is in the vanguard of this trend, offering a learning program designed by student and faculty advisor to meet the student's particular background and aspirations. Many of the recent and unconventional innovations in higher education, such as Britain's Open University, through greater reliance on previously underused resources such as the media, and less

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[2] See *Less Time, More Options: Education Beyond the High School*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970, a special report and recommendations by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.

reliance on high cost elements, staff, and physical facilities, can offer, at least potentially, education at lower cost.

In the absence of efforts to improve understanding of the professoriate's multiple functions and diversity of attitudes, it seems likely that in mass education systems involving huge public expenditure the public will step up its demands for controls on the profession—demands, for example, that professors spend more time teaching and less in pursuit of research or other activities connected with their specialities. These controls, whether initiated by the public through its legislatures, through coordinating boards, or through the administrations of individual institutions, are naturally resented by professors for they reveal a lack of trust in the faculty's ability to make the best judgments on its use of time and resources. As these kinds of controls have increased, and for other reasons as well, there has been an exodus of research-oriented professors from the university to research institutes and other nonuniversity havens in industry or government—wherever a more congenial and freer atmosphere conducive to scholarly research may be found.

This exodus may well augur the time when higher education splits into more discrete categories of endeavor. The scholar who prefers research to teaching may find a more compatible climate in the research institute, and the public university may find itself giving more attention than formerly to undergraduate education. Certainly the university as a home for all kinds of academic pursuits seems vulnerable. The long-range effects of such a trend, if it occurs, may further weaken the status of the university because it will be less able to attract first-rate intellectual talent. If government, industry, private or public research centers can offer the best talents of the country more freedom, status, money, and power, it seems obvious that neither the university nor the professoriate will continue their monopoly on knowledge. This dispersion of talent throughout society will likely be

reflected on the higher education scene itself. More division of labor is likely as seen by the range of diverse institutions that are now emerging.

One offshoot of this development that is rapidly gaining ground is the concept that education can and should be available throughout one's lifetime. Whether termed recurrent or lifelong or continuing education, it is a notion that starts with the question, "What kinds of education do people need?" rather than, "What kinds of institutions should there be?" With greater affluence and leisure time, mobility, rapid changes in the content and character of work, and with greater awareness of the personal and professional or vocational benefits of education spreading throughout societies, adults seek more and more opportunities for education and especially for education geared in structure as well as content to the realities of adult life, including employment and family responsibilities.

Though recurrent education is far from a reality today, the beginnings of such a new educational context are now apparent in the growth of more diversified and more flexible arrangements for postsecondary education, in external degree programs and work-study programs among others. In this connection Martin Trow noted that,

> . . . the new forms of continuing or recurrent or adult education are compatible with diverse types of existing systems, and can perform as wide a range of functions as traditional systems. One of its great appeals is that there can be forms of recurrent or lifelong learning that are genuinely part of an elite system, like the Open University in Britain; forms that are aspects of mass higher education, with its diverse functions and services contained within a structure of traditional standards and assumptions, like the Extended University of California; and lastly, various forms of recurrent education associated with universal access, like the Empire State system in New York. It is a strength of recurrent

education that it can take forms as varied as more traditional kinds of institutions and can complement them.[3]

Functional Requirements

With the proliferation of such diverse forms of higher education, however, another requirement has emerged. That is the need for ensuring that these institutions supplement and complement one another in purpose and functioning, rather than duplicate efforts or compete for the scarce talent and funds available to support such a broadened system. The very pluralism and fragmentation of mass higher education have brought forth a demand for greater integration of the whole enterprise, a demand with roots both in the public and, in some cases at least, among those within institutions.

For the public, this demand has stemmed from concern not only about possible waste and inefficiency, but also about the overall management of institutions, ensuring that they produce the research and the people who can effect public benefit. Contrary to the widespread notion that those within institutions inevitably resist coordination and planning, a complementary impulse has arisen in some institutions, based in part on the need to preserve the diversity of higher education.

The kinds of planning and coordinating mechanisms have, of course, varied widely from country to country and even within a country. In the United States, for example, there is planning at the institutional level through consortia, at the state level through government coordinating boards, and at the regional and federal level. Moreover, planning is not limited to national terrain. International bodies such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

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[3] Martin Trow, "Report on 'Recurrent Education,'" OECD Conference on Post-Secondary Education, Paris, June 1973, p. 14.

(OECD), and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) are also growing.

Among the most intriguing questions raised during the conference was that of whether planning and coordination were inevitably linked to centralization and to central control of higher education. Here, as Henri Janne pointed out in discussion, the implications of planning diverge, depending on traditional political structures and relationships.

In systems such as those in Belgium, France, and Sweden, which have traditionally been highly centralized, planning and coordination are now seen as possible mechanisms for decentralization, for greater autonomy for individual institutions, and for breaking up rigid central bureaucracies. In Sweden, for example, the U68 commission on higher education has proposed geographic decentralization of higher education with institutions spread throughout the 19 regions of the country. A governing board, composed predominantly of political appointees but including a representation of teachers, students, and staff, would coordinate the functions of institutions within each region.[4]

In contrast, in those countries where decentralization had been the rule, or where, as in federal systems, the states and not the federal government were the main controlling agents of higher education, the move is toward greater central, federal control. In large part, this has happened because the powers of taxation and the ability to raise monies have already followed that route. Thus, as higher education becomes more dependent on public funds, the scrutiny of its

[4] Torsten Husen, "Access to the University," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, p. 90.

institutions similarly passes to the most prominent and powerful public authority.[5]

Although it is not yet clear whether coordination and planning in themselves will bring greater public support to higher education, it does seem clear that *without* some degree of planning in the framework of a diversified system, institutions operating individually will be vulnerable to two potentially destructive impulses. One of these is the tendency of institutions to emulate others that have acquired somewhat more scope, funds, or prestige at a higher level within the system. Examples cited were junior colleges trying to become four-year institutions, and colleges trying to become universities. Given rein, these tendencies would dissipate a prime strength of mass higher education—its diversity. The other pressure on individual and independent institutions is an external one—that is, the growing scrutiny of institutional performance among various sectors of the public. Legislators and funding agencies especially are measuring the performance of the institutions against spiraling costs. It is the independent institution, functioning in isolation from other parts of the system, that may run into the most trouble in trying to justify its performance in relation to the public interest.

[5] The point was well made by James A. Perkins who noted in regard to planning that "... as cost and importance of educational matters increase, decision-making moves up the hierarchical scale, and away from the educational institutions toward political structures." *The University in Transition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 84.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AUTHORITY

One consequence of higher education's increasing importance in society, its expansion, and its reliance on greater proportions of the public budget has been that it must justify its performance—both its internal efficiency as well as its service to society—to public authority in ever more rigorous terms. Zelman Cowen seconded Martin Trow's comment that "Post-secondary education has been perceived as having become too important . . . and too costly to be left to professors and educators alone. . . ."[1] Public concern has been translated into public control over the allocation of resources among and within institutions, and is increasingly exercised in areas that were formerly the province of academics. Finally, public concern with higher education is becoming manifest increasingly through the courts.

Autonomy vs. Accountability

Is there a point at which accountability to the public purse and public purpose will transform higher education into merely another operating arm of public authority? Does society still need independent and unique institutions with special functions? Can these institutions thrive only in freedom from external controls? The pressure for greater accountability has brought to the forefront these and other questions that relate to the capacity of institutions of higher education "to make judgments about what they will do with the resources available to them, what they will teach and say

[1] Zelman Cowen, "Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, p. 156.

and how they teach and say it, what research they will undertake and decline to undertake."[2]

The issue is most often phrased as the conflict between accountability and the tradition of autonomy, particularly autonomy for the university. Yet the problem is seen in very different lights depending largely on differences in the extent of public control of higher education within individual countries. Some view government interventions into the life of higher education with foreboding—a new trend vigorously to be resisted. Others see increasing public control as, if not desirable, at least tolerable—a difference of degree and not of kind. In the United States and Australia, for example, educators are concerned with the threat to the autonomy of institutions and the potential repercussions on academic freedom. In contrast, as many of the European participants at Aspen noted, institutional autonomy is not an issue in Europe since most Continental universities have long been under control of central governments (or state governments, as in Germany). There autonomy has always been identified with that of the individual professor or chairholder, and often such autonomy served not to preserve freedom but to stifle the initiative and power of nonchairholders. Thus in Europe autonomy is rarely equated with academic freedom.

It would seem that in almost all societies the university and other institutions of higher education acknowledge that they are financially accountable to the public and, in some countries, that they are accountable to public definitions of purpose and function as well. Whether in Ghana or Poland, Sweden or Australia, the needs and purposes of societies have shaped the response of the institutions of higher education. The question for most institutions is thus not whether there should be accountability, with its implications for public

[2] Ibid., p. 153.

control, but rather how to define the legitimate scope of that control.

The question of the proper scope of public or government control of institutions is perhaps easier to answer by identifying which areas would be improper. First, most would agree that government has no legitimate right of interference in faculty appointments or removals. Except in highly politicized countries, or highly politicized periods (the McCarthy period of the early 1950s in the United States for example), such intervention is rare. Much more common is a subtler form of government interference into areas of management of the institution. As the costs of education have risen, institutions have been asked to present and justify in ever greater detail their expenditures and projected needs. Funding agencies defend these demands as necessary to eliminate waste, duplication, and inefficient use of resources both within individual institutions and within the system of institutions as a whole. The effect, however, goes well beyond fiscal control.

In more than one country, the allocation of resources to an institution is based on formulas specifying, for example, student/teacher ratios, number of faculty in a department, number of books to be purchased, etc. The University Grants Committee (UGC) in Great Britain offers one illustration. Not only do its formulas concerning personnel and physical facilities overlap the traditional autonomy of the university, but the gradual pressures from government on the UGC itself may foreshadow the diminution of its traditional function as "buffer" between university and government. Thus the universities may be brought toward greater and more direct public accountability. Sweden presents another example, where the contrast between present and past procedures shows up in sharp relief. In the past, chairholders had almost complete power over decisions on staff. Each professor decided what was to be taught, when, where, and how.

Today, the government regulates the number of academic staff per institution, the number of hours of teaching, even the amount of floor space to be allotted each student in a new library facility. The government is also intruding into research. Formerly a research council run by academics was in charge of allocations to university research. Now the government seeks, through its representatives, a majority on the council to ensure better (in the government's view) control of research decisions.

The emphasis on formulas and the extension of government control into line items of the budget present a dilemma for administrators. Since the formulas are made up on the basis of data supplied by individual institutions, the question arises of whether to provide accurate information that could, in the hands of unsympathetic or incompetent regulators, lead to damaging decisions. Administrators may be tempted instead to provide ambiguous or obscure data in the hope that decisions will be similarly ambiguous, therefore subject to changing (i.e., more favorable) interpretation. The course of action most beneficial to the institution may depend in large part on the knowledge and attitudes of the government regulators. If they are sympathetic and sensitive to the needs of institutions, Ernest Boyer noted in discussion, the best and most precise data should be provided to help them arrive at the best decisions on resource allocations, thereby turning regulation of the educator into education of the regulator.

The problem goes well beyond one of data, however, for institutional managers must find ways to communicate their needs and purposes in nonquantifiable ways to promote decisions that take into account the *quality* of the educational enterprise. Here it would seem that the burden of proof has fallen increasingly on the shoulders of institutional managers. They can no longer assume a sympathetic public authority, but must act in ways to forge that sympathy.

Threat to Academic Freedom

Another of the threats perceived in the growing encroachments of the government in institutional management is the danger of weakening the academic freedom of individual professors. In fact, one of the strongest arguments for the tradition of institutional autonomy has been tha it, among other safeguards, ensured academic freedom. In this view the freedom of the professor in the classroom has as i s first line of defense the freedom of his institution from interference by external power. But as several participants pointed out, this view is premised on the notion that the greatest potential threat to freedom stems from forces outside the university. There are numerous examples, however, of where the greatest threats come from within the institutions. And as Hellmut Becker remarked, in some countries the autonomy of chairholders and parochialism of departments has often fettered rather than freed the pursuit of knowledge.

Clearly, differences in national contexts and university traditions determine the extent to which academic freedom is or could be threatened by demands for accountability from higher education. Since accountability is part of an overall political process, however, it would seem inevitable that political considerations will increasingly influence, presumably in indirect and subtle ways, the conduct of institutions. The danger lies in the extent to which it will permeate the classroom as well. Alex Kwapong stated the case for independence thus:

> . . . a university which is a mere tool of government and a mere department of government ceases to be a university as the term is accepted and understood. A university must not only serve but must also challenge through critical and independent thought the orthodoxies of the moment, dissent being a necessary feature of academic integrity. . . . Hence the need for the necessary element of self-management—in the determination of curriculum, the

appointment of its staff, the management of its teaching and research—which is a *sine qua non* for the essential end of academic excellence and success.[3]

Strengths of Systems

How then can the "necessary element of self-management" be anchored against the intrusions of government? Paradoxically, a development that is seen by some as a large threat to institutional autonomy may just turn out to be the most promising avenue for protecting autonomy. This is the growth of systems of institutions, with coordinating boards at the interface between individual institutions and public authority. The values of coordinating systems, outlined by Ernest Boyer, are not only that they can respond better to the demand for accountability, but also offer a range of benefits to individual institutions. By giving up some degree of autonomy to the system, individual members can be guaranteed ultimately more independence than they would functioning in isolation. Moreover, within the system, under ideal conditions, differentiation of missions can be preserved. "There is strength in unity," Boyer noted, "and clusters of coordinated institutions can defend their traditions and goals better than isolated campuses which stand alone."[4]

Just as administrators of individual institutions can run interference for faculty, so too can coordinating bodies run interference for the system of institutions. Whether they do depends, of course, on the locus of coordination. Should it be in government itself, or in some outside body? Should coordinating bodies be composed of academic, government, lay persons, or some mixture? Finally, how should coordina-

[3] Alex Kwapong, "University Autonomy, Accountability and Planning," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, p. 174.

[4] Ernest Boyer, "Systems of Higher Education," in *Higher Education: Crisis and Support*, p. 193.

tion be implemented in practical terms? These are but a few of the questions just now being raised and examined in many countries. They are questions, too, that open an important line of inquiry to the emerging field of comparative higher education studies, for exploring not only the particular lessons of each country's experience, but equally those underlying forces leading to educational change that are common to all countries at various stages in their development.

A major challenge to educators and researchers, administrators and government officials will be the exploration of possible routes to ensuring quality, diversity, and strength in higher education. Finally, whatever the weight of inertia in any institution and in any educational system, countervailing pressures are moving education toward greater responsiveness to the changing needs of societies. It is this responsiveness that must be at the core of the drive to secure greater public support.

International Council for Educational Development

The International Council for Educational Development (ICED) is an international non-profit association of persons with a common concern for the future of education and its role in social and economic development.

ICED's three major interests are strategies for educational development; the modernization and management of systems of higher education; and the international programs and responsibilities of higher education. In each area, ICED's purposes are to identify and analyze major educational problems shared by a number of countries, to generate policy recommendations, and to provide consultation, on request, to international and national organizations.

ICED's activities are directed by James A. Perkins, chief executive officer and chairman of an international board. Philip H. Coombs is vice chairman. The headquarters office is in New York City.

The main support for ICED to date has come from the Ford Foundation, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UNICEF, and the Clark Foundation.

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